

Families no longer going hungry, thanks to 'prepaid food plan'

SELAYANG: For the past year, Rogayah Sano, 37, and her eight children have been subsisting on a monthly stipend of RM500.

The amount received from the Welfare Department is the Orang Asli's only means of supporting her eight children, aged between two and 18, since her husband abandoned them.

When the unemployed single mother runs low on cash, she relies on the charity of relatives and neighbours at her village in Simpan Tiga, Gombak.

However, Rogayah's family along with 49 others in Batu Caves can now look forward to better days as they have been adopted under MyKasih Foundation's Love My Neighbourhood programme.

The programme, which aims to efficiently provide food to the needy, has to date benefited 850 families from neighbourhoods in the Klang Valley, Penang, Ipoh and Johor through a facility called ePetro.

One representative from each

adopted family, usually the mother, gets to swipe his or her MyKad to buy essential items like Milo, rice, bread flour, sugar and cooking oil worth up to RM80 a month at selected retail outlets for one year.

To qualify for the programme, the family needs to have a household income of RM1,000 or less. Its number of dependents such as children, the elderly or the disabled, in the family is also a factor for consideration.

Rogayah, who was present at the launch of the aid in Giant Hypermarket Batu Caves, was relieved as she no longer had to rely on the kindness of others to support her family.

"I no longer have to wait for handouts during festivities or charity drives. I also do not have to suffer the indignity of relying on neighbours and relatives to feed my children," she said.

V. Kamala, 35, who is also a single mother, was happy that someone had thought of a "prepaid food plan for the poor" as most poor

families go hungry waiting for welfare assistance.

The programme also offers training on budgeting and micro financing for the adopted households, and tuition classes and skills training for the children.

The sum of RM100,000 was donated to the MyKasih Foundation Love My Neighbourhood programme by EMC Computer Systems (Malaysia) Sdn Bhd, ECM Libra Financial Group Bhd and The Edge Communications Sdn Bhd. Half of the sum is set aside for this batch of families and the remainder for the next batch.

Present at the event was foundation chairman Ngau Boon Keat, its directors Tan Sri Megat Najmuddin Megat Khas and Datuk Dr Rebecca Fatima Sta Maria, and its chief executive officer Jeff Perera. Also present were Lions Club Malaysia governor Datuk Danny Ooi and EMC Computer Systems Sdn Bhd managing director of Malaysia and Vietnam Peter Goh. — *By Veena Babulal*



Rogayah Sano and all of her eight children have been adopted under the MyKasih 'Love My Neighbourhood' programme, which gives food aid to poor families. —

Picture by Yazit Razali